

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 2

NDASFAA Update

Page 3

SLND-Guarantor Bulletin Update
MPN Forms Available Soon
Cash Management Rules for July 1, 1999
SLND-Guarantor Streamlining Duties
Debt Management Guide

Page 4

Did You Know? PSA's
Who's Coming and Going at SLND?

Page 5

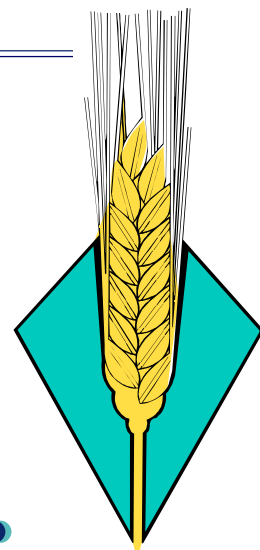
SLND Revises Online Loan Counseling
Loan Counseling Video
Life 101
EDE News from HECN

Page 6

Upcoming Events

Prairie Publications

Volume 11, Issue 5
May 1999



Y2K UPDATE

by Wally Erhardt, Associate Director
SLND-Guarantor

As the beginning of May arrives, there are only 245 days left before we turn the calendar to a new millennium. For SLND-Guarantor's computer system, a complete conversion of the date field was required, and since this system owns more than 500 computer jobs, it was a major undertaking for us.

To accomplish the task, we established a project team of 20 people composed of employees from throughout the Guarantor working together with our Information Systems staff. A project plan was prepared initially to function as the guide to follow in implementing this year-long task. Under the test system, we reviewed processing for many different days into the future year and were actually able to move the date out to 2001 in order to determine that the system would work.

Numerous enhancements were required in order to complete the task, and on March 31 we converted to the Y2K compliant version. The conversion provided quite a bit of excitement throughout the agency as

employees were very anxious for the final results. We had a detailed conversion plan which contained a few scenarios and I am happy to report that the conversion followed the best case scenario. If you've had a chance to access our system to do cancellation/revision transactions, you may have noticed the extra fields for the century indicator.

As we move through these next 245 days, I know that our extra attention to detail and doing the job right will benefit us and, I believe, we should experience few system problems as the new century arrives.

GUARANTOR SETS MILESTONE

by Wally Erhardt, Associate Director
SLND-Guarantor

SLND-Guarantor, for the 12-month period ending 3/31/99, processed in excess of \$100 million of guarantees for student loans. This is the first time in our history that any 12-month period exceeded this milestone. A special thanks to all the schools and lenders involved for your business, and an extra special thanks to our staff!

SLND PLANS ALLIANCE LENDER TRAINING

by Wally Erhardt, Associate Director
SLND-Guarantor

SLND-Guarantor will be hosting training for Alliance lenders in May, on a regional basis, throughout North Dakota. This training will provide lenders the opportunity to find out about recent changes in the student loan programs and to better equip themselves as they meet with parents and students. The training will be held over lunch and last about two hours. Training dates and locations are:

May 11 - Fargo

May 12 - Dickinson and Devils Lake

May 13 - Bismarck

May 17 - Minot

For more information or to register, please contact Char Feist at (800) 472-2166 ext. 85753, locally at 328-5753, or e-mail to cfeist@pioneer.state.nd.us.

NDASFAA UPDATE

by Bruce Helgerud
Financial Aid Administrator
UND-Grand Forks
President - NDASFAA

Greetings!

Many things going on. New developments—New opportunities. Remember to get to the Federal Training in Minot on the 18th and 19th of May. In addition to that training, remember the RNASFAA Summer Institute in June. The NASFAA Conference is in July so, if you can, you should try to work that into your summer plans.

Also just announced is Federal “Training for New Financial Aid Administrators.” The Department of Education announced a new training series beginning in May for financial aid office staff with little or no experience in financial aid. This training will provide an introduction to the Title IV student aid programs and covers the basic concepts and procedures needed to properly manage and award federal student financial aid. The training will also show how to use ED’s publications and other resources to find information needed to help students. Each workshop is three and one-half days. There are two ways to register. You may either complete and fax a registration form to (703) 284-5629, or send an e-mail with your name, address, school, phone number, e-mail address, fax number, and length of experience to <sfatraining@NCS.com>. You should receive a faxed or e-mail confirmation within a few days, along with directions to the training site and hotel suggestions. Do not make travel plans to attend a workshop until you have received a confirmation. If you have questions

about the workshop, or wish to check the status of your registration, you can call Amy Nguyen at (703) 284-5670. The training in Region VIII will be September 21-24, 1999 at the ED Regional Training Facility, Denver, CO. For the registration form and more information, you should use IFAP.

Another development in the training area is the Leadership Session '99 which will be held prior to this year’s RNASFAA Summer Institute. The session is two days—June 5 and 6, the Saturday and Sunday before the Summer Institute begins—and will focus on the skills, attitudes, and actions that make powerful leaders. Each state president is asked to nominate at least two individuals and an alternate. The session will have spaces for twenty individuals this year. The cost of the session is just \$50 and includes Saturday night in the dorms, Saturday meals, and a continental breakfast on Sunday. Leadership attendees do not have to attend the Summer Institute, but they are certainly encouraged to do so. If there are any of you who are interested in attending this session, please contact me and I will forward your name to the session staff to see if there is a slot available.

In other developments, The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) recently established a website for students to access their NSLDS information. The website address is www.nsls.ed.gov. To access this information, however, a student must have an EAC (Electronic Access Code). In order to receive an EAC, a student must be eligible for the 1999-2000 renewal FAFSA. Expanding the availability of an EAC to all students is seriously

being explored. The NSLDS Student Access site provides students with information on the following: Loan/Grant Review - this section allows the borrower to view his/her loan and grant records and obtain balance and loan holder information; and Links - links are provided to various guaranty agencies and 11 of the major lenders.

And for our future, Greg Woods, the Chief Operating Officer, PBO Department of Education, has issued notice that ED is developing a “Modernization Blueprint” that will show how ED will move it’s current computer systems into a new streamlined and integrated system that utilizes a system architecture that is open and easily accessible by all partners. The purpose of the blueprint is to lay out the sequence of steps that will be needed to take ED’s computer systems from where they are to where they should be, over a five-year period. The plan is to draw from the work done by Project EASI, modify it, and then move ahead in modular approach to develop a new integrated, open, customer-friendly system that incorporates high-end financial management system features for accountability and tighter funds control.

Then, there is that Budget Resolution for FY2000, the Y2K situation, those darn Chapter 30 Veterans Benefits, and other stuff like packaging/award letters, etc. to keep us busy and entertained.

**Prairie
Publications**
STUDENT LOANS OF NORTH DAKOTA
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Bismarck, ND 58506-5524

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overseen by
North Dakota
Industrial Commission

GOVERNOR
Edward T. Schafer

ATTORNEY GENERAL
Heidi Heitkamp

COMMISSIONER OF AGRICULTURE
Roger Johnson

PRAIRIE PUBLICATIONS

By Student Loans of North Dakota is a newsletter circulated to lenders, college financial aid and admissions personnel, high school guidance counselors, other guaranty agencies, and individuals needing information about student loans. To obtain a copy, please write to Prairie Publications, c/o Student Loans of North Dakota, PO Box 5524, Bismarck, ND 58506-5524. *All articles are of the writer's opinion and should not be construed as Student Loans of North Dakota policy unless so stated.*

SLND-GUARANTOR BULLETIN UPDATE

by Holly Schirado, New Loans Supervisor
SLND-Guarantor

The SLND-Guarantor Bulletin #2-99 was issued on April 5, 1999 and contained the following information:

- Disaster areas defined in AR and TN.
- New poverty guidelines were published (Alaska-\$13,840; Hawaii-\$12,730; Other states-\$11,060).
- *Common Manual* updates include: determining who's responsible when an ineligible borrower receives funds; deferment eligibility of new loans when prior loans are paid-in-full; subsidized loan guarantees; billing for special allowance on defaulted loans; the *Common Manual's* definition of satisfactory repayment arrangement; FCL interest rebate fee; lender audit exemptions; repayment disclosure requirements; mandatory forbearance request modifications; and cohort default rate appeals.

If you would like a copy of the bulletin, please contact Holly Schirado at (800) 472-2166 ext. 85751, locally at 328-5751, or e-mail to <hschirad@pioneer.state.nd.us>.

MPN FORMS AVAILABLE SOON

As of the printing of this *Prairie Publications* issue, the new Master Promissory Note forms have either been received, or will be received shortly! The forms were ordered in early April. If you would like a supply, please contact Holly at (800) 472-2166 ext. 85751, locally at 328-5791 or e-mail to <hschirad@pioneer.state.nd.us>.

CASH MANAGEMENT RULES FOR JULY 1, 1999

by Holly Schirado, SLND-Guarantor

Beginning July 1, 1999, schools will have three days within which to deliver the loan funds to the borrower if those funds were received by EFT or master check. If the delivery cannot be made within the initial three-day time frame, the school will still have the ten-day conditional period and the ten-day return period in which to deliver or return the funds to the lender. This rule applies to loan proceeds received by the school on or after July 1, 1999.

The time frame for delivering funds received in the form of a check will remain at 30 days after receipt of the proceeds. The chart found on Page 28, Chapter 6 of the *Common Manual* provides the time frames for the delivery and return of loan funds.

SLND-GUARANTOR STREAMLINING DUTIES

by Holly Schirado, SLND-Guarantor

Due to SLND's new document imaging process, we have changed the way in which paper applications are handled. As a result, we expect to see a faster turnaround time of loan processing.

With new processes such as the Master Promissory Note, where less paper will eventually be a reality, the turnaround for issuing loan funds will be much shorter.

DEBT MANAGEMENT GUIDE

by Beth Elkin
Program Development Coordinator
SLND-Guarantor

Over the past several months, SLND has been working with two commercial art students in designing a new look for our publications. You will see this design incorporated as publications are updated and printed.

Matthew Stroh and Dylan Miller, students attending Bismarck State College, have put in countless hours to design a new look to our products. We are excited about the working relationship between SLND and these students. The first publication to carry the new design will be the *Debt Management Guide*.

This publication will be available by June. In addition to the new look, we are also incorporating the Perkins and Nursing student loan information into the *Debt Management Guide*.

The *Guide* will provide an overview of FFELP, Perkins and Nursing student loan borrower rights and responsibilities. In addition, debt management and default awareness information are also discussed.

The *Debt Management Guide* is a default prevention tool schools can use to assist their student loan borrowers in understanding the loan programs through which they have borrowed. These days, everyone who works with financial aid is concerned about the increasing debt burden of students and the potential this has on our already low default rates. Utilizing the *Debt Management Guide* will help you provide information that is thorough and beneficial to borrowers.

If you would like a supply of the *Debt Management Guide*, contact SLND by e-mail at <bndsl@pioneer.state.nd.us> or call JoAnn Steckler or Beth Elkin at (800) 472-2166 Ext. 85619 or 85653.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Did You Know? PSA's

The following Public Service Announcements will be used in May. These messages are a service of Student Loans of North Dakota, administered by Bank of North Dakota, and are "designed to meet your student loan needs." If you have an idea or suggestion on a PSA you would like us to use, or if you have comments on previous ones, please call Beth or JoAnn in Program Development at 1-800-472-2166 ext. 85653 or 85619.

Did you know high school students are welcome to visit the college campus or trade school they are thinking about attending? If college is in your future plans, you are encouraged to visit the colleges you are interested in. A visit allows you to tour the campus, talk with instructors and other students, and have questions answered by admission and financial aid staff. To learn more about arranging a visit, contact your high school counselor, college admission office, or College Information Service at (800) 554-2717.

Did you know each college a student applies to will send a financial aid award letter outlining the types of financial aid the student is eligible to receive? Students should review each letter to decide which award package they will accept, and respond quickly to ensure they receive their financial aid. If you have questions about an award letter, call the school. If you have other college-related questions, call College Information Service at (800) 554-2717.

Did you know there are several types of financial aid to help pay for college? Financial aid could be a federal low-interest student loan, which must be repaid, or a grant, fellowship, or scholarship (called gift aid) which does not have to be repaid. Student loan eligibility is outlined in an award letter sent by the college, but it is the student's responsibility to search out and apply for gift aid. The best source is your local library, the Internet, or you can call College Information Service at (800) 554-2717.

Did you know you can complete your student loan counseling on the Web? Federal regulations require Stafford student loan borrowers to complete a loan counseling session. Schools may offer student loan counseling in groups or individual settings. Borrowers may also be able to complete their student loan counseling via the Web. Student loan borrowers can visit Student Loans of North Dakota's web site at: www.banknd.com/slnd to fulfill their loan counseling requirements.

Who's Coming And Going at SLND?

Trudi Hogue

has transferred to SLND-Loan Servicing as a Processing Specialist. Her former position was that of Cancellation/Revision Specialist with SLND-Guarantor.

Rhonda Mendieta

has transferred from her position as Customer Service Specialist to that of Processing Specialist within SLND-Loan Servicing.

Tina Steffenson

has left her position of Processing Specialist with SLND-Loan Servicing. She recently moved to Iowa where her husband will begin his career working in a power plant.

Clair Sorge

has left her position of Processing Specialist with SLND-Loan Servicing. She is going to work for her husband in his business.

Congratulations, Farewell, and Good Luck!

SLND

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Renae Martin has been chosen as Employee of the Month for May. Renae started her employment with SLND-Fiscal & Administrative Services in November 1997. She is a COE student from Bismarck High School who assists Program Development and College Information Service.

Renae is a "right and left hand" to the department she works in. She is always willing to help out, no matter how much she has to do. Renae picks things up very quickly and completes projects timely and accurately.

Renae always helps out when we are in a bind. In time of need, she is always there. There have been many times when we are going out of town and Renae has made sure that we have all the things we need to get us through our trip.

Congratulations!



COLLEGE
INFORMATION
SERVICE

1-800-554-2717

Wow!

*Did you know that
4 of every 10
college students
nationwide are 25
years of age or
over and 55% of
them are women?*

SLND REVISES ONLINE LOAN COUNSELING

by Karen Keller and Beth Elkin

SLND has received a variety of suggestions and requests from colleges and universities to enhance our Online Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling, making it more user-friendly. We recently incorporated many of those suggestions and requests into SLND's loan counseling sessions and feel that the improvements will appeal to everyone who uses it.

You will notice several things:

- ➔ We have added Perkins and Nursing student loan information and have shortened the material covered in both the Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling sessions.
- ➔ The final exam at the end of the Exit Loan Counseling session has been removed.
- ➔ These changes will considerably speed up the time it takes for students to complete the session.

We thank everyone for their input on the redesign. We encourage financial aid personnel to view the changes and added features. For those who have not seen our product, visit our online loan counseling at www.banknd.com/slnd.

All colleges and universities who wish to use SLND's Online Entrance and Exit Loan Counseling can have it personalized to meet the needs of their institution. They also receive a unique UserID and Password to access the secure database. The database gives them the capabilities to print out reports on demand in their office or print out an Entrance Certification Form or Exit Interview Data Form that was completed by a student. Financial aid personnel are also sent an auto response e-mail message when students have completed their entrance or exit loan counseling session.

We are excited about the new online loan counseling. And, many of you have noticed the changes have been made within days of your

requests. This is the advantage of working with a locally-maintained web site.

Thanks again to everyone who has called us with suggestions. We hope you will continue to do this and look forward to hearing from you.

LOAN COUNSELING VIDEO

by Beth Elkin

Program Development Coordinator
SLND-Guarantor

Do you have students that borrow through the FFELP and the Perkins or Nursing student loan programs? If you do, you undoubtedly have students that need to attend loan counseling sessions for FFELP and again for the Perkins or Nursing loans. Based upon feedback from different colleges and universities, SLND is producing a new loan counseling video that will address all of these programs.

As we have announced regarding our online loan counseling sessions, we are including Perkins and Nursing student loan information in this program. David Martin and Mari Krag from the Student Loan Service Center have assisted in providing information as it relates to the Perkins and Nursing loan programs.

David, Mari, and SLND are excited about this joint venture. Through our cooperative efforts, we believe the video will be beneficial to students and financial aid offices. This should streamline the loan counseling process and help students understand their rights and responsibilities as borrowers of Stafford, PLUS, Perkins and Nursing student loans.

The video should be available by early summer and a copy will be provided to financial aid offices in North Dakota, South Dakota, and some of the bordering Minnesota schools.

Feel free to contact us if you have comments regarding this program.

LIFE 101

At SLND-Bank of North Dakota, we have been busy with our mailing to high school seniors. This year, we will be sending directly to the students' home, a publication entitled *Life 101*. This publication opens with an inspiring article on Oprah Winfrey and provides students with encouragement to pursue their goals in life.

Life 101 provides valuable advice and interesting articles on job interviews, college and money, resume writing, highest paying careers, student loans, and money management.

We feel the publication will be useful to students and their families as they pursue their future goals, whether it be furthering their education or entering the workforce.

Copies of *Life 101* will be mailed to the financial aid and admission offices in the near future.

The publication also features a new ad, geared to the high school student. The ad, "Designed to Fit" is also featured on the last page in this edition of Prairie Publications.

We welcome any suggestions, comments, or concerns you may have on this publication, as well as any existing informational pieces. Please feel free to contact JoAnn Steckler or Beth Elkin at (800) 472-2166 ext. 85619 or 85653 at any time with your input.

LINKS ESTABLISHED TO COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES

SLND has added links to all North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and Wyoming colleges/universities who have web sites and are included in our college contact lists located at http://www.banknd.com/slnd/cis_more_info.htm. College addresses, telephone numbers, and Title IV Codes can be found in these lists. Also available are the estimated costs of attendance for schools in North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and Wyoming.

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EDE NEWS FROM HECN

by Scott Mahar

NDUS, HECN-SIS, Grand Forks, ND

After almost three years working with the Electronic Data Exchange program (EDE), this will be my last article. No, I'm not leaving, but I have taken another position. And while Rick's knowledge and experience can't be replaced, I hope to provide the highest level of customer service which has been the trademark of HECN. While I look forward to this new challenge, I also expect to be very involved in the EDE process.

We have received and began installing the new 32-bit Windows EDConnect software. To date, each installation of the software has been fairly easy. The new software will eventually enable schools to access Title IV WAN via the Internet, thus the reason we all needed to install a dial-up network with additional security features.

Probably the biggest use of EDConnect is to receive Pmessages or request other data in our mailbox. To request data with the new software from your mailbox:

- 1) Start the new EDConnect 32-bit Windows software by double-clicking on the icon and log in.
 - 2) From the menu, choose FILE and OPEN.
 - 3) From the OPEN menu, choose ALL. This request will get you all data and all messages. Click on OK.
 - 4) You will notice a green line in the transmission queue.
 - 5) From the menu, choose Transmission and Now.
- A second way to complete the All Data, All Messages request is:

- 1) From Windows 95, choose START, PROGRAMS, EDConn32, and ALL Template.

- 2) Choosing this option will open the All Data, All Messages request in the transmission queue.
- 3) From the menu, choose Transmission and Now.

As I end my last EDE article, I must take time to thank all of the EDE users for making my work life so enjoyable. Each and every one of the EDE users has been helpful in getting new software installed and have been very understanding when the software was slow. Because I have enjoyed working with everyone, I do intend to continue to play a role in the EDE process, no matter how big or small that part may be. I hope that each of you can account for at least one new item you learned with my help. We all have to continue to learn together in an effort to be sure our students receive the best service available.

Until next month—same place, same time, different title...Thanks! And, as always, if you have any questions, feel free to call! yes, I will continue to write articles each month. I have accepted the position of State Training Officer which was previously held by Rick.



May 11 - Alliance Lender Training, Fargo, ND

May 12 - Alliance Lender Training, Dickinson and Devils Lake, ND

May 13 - Alliance Lender Training, Bismarck, ND

May 17 - Alliance Lender Training, Minot, ND

May 18-19 - DOE Spring Training '99, Minot State University, Memorial and Model Halls, Minot, ND

June 6-11 - RMAFSA Summer Institute, Colorado Springs, CO

July 12-15 - 1999 Annual NASFAA Conference, Las Vegas, NV